

Hamilton Field, Warehouse Type B
(Facility No. 412,
Quartermaster/Exchange Warehouse)
Escolta Avenue and 4th Street
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-Q

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
1Q-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
HAMILTON FIELD
Warehouse Type B
(Quartermaster/Exchange Warehouse, Facility No. 412)

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Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Warehouse Type B
Facility No. 412 (Escolta Avenue and 4th Street)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Present Owner: General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Storage of unused furniture and equipment

Statement of Significance:

Facility No. 412 was the first warehouse constructed on base to serve the Quartermaster post exchange. In 1960 it was used as a Supply and Equipment Warehouse. By 1966 this building functioned variously as a wing headquarters and an administration facility for commercial transfer operations. This building is an example of the application of an important architectural trend (Spanish Colonial Revival) adapted to reflect California's Mission heritage in a departure from traditional military architecture.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-F for a condensed general Statement of Significance.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of Erection:** Construction on the Quartermaster's/Exchange warehouse was completed on July 12, 1941 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1933-1971).
2. **Architect:** Hamilton Field was designed under the guidance of Captain Howard B. Nurse, Construction Quartermaster. He was assisted by a corps of civilians headed by H. P. Spencer, Chief Architect, and F. W. Salfinger, Chief Engineer. Captain F. C. Petes and Lieutenant J. H. Veal of the Quartermaster's Corps were detailed to Marin County by the War Department to assist Nurse (*Novato Advance* May 28, 1932). Landscaping efforts were directed by C. C. Stevens, a local landscape engineer, using plantings chosen by Nurse and donated by Marin County citizens.
3. **Original Owner:** Hamilton Field is on land originally owned by private individuals and companies. In 1930, the California Packing Company sold 630 acres of land to Marin County to use to entice the Army to build on the site. An additional 161 acres were purchased from Dr. T. Peter and Julia Bodkin. These parcels were combined with other County-owned land, and in 1932 Marin County sold a 927-acre parcel of land to the Department of the Army for \$1.00 for use by the Army Air Corps as an air field. In 1947 Hamilton Air Field was transferred to the newly-formed U. S. Air Force and renamed Hamilton Air Force Base. In 1974 the U. S. Congress declared the installation excess to military needs and closed the base (Maniery et al. 1993). The warehouse was transferred to General Services Administration in 1974 and was sold to private developers as excess property in 1996.
4. **Builder, Contractor, Supplier:** This warehouse was constructed six years after the initial construction phase, using a compatible design. The builder of this warehouse is unknown. When completed, the warehouse costs totalled \$55,469.42.
5. **Original Plans and Construction:** Copies of original plans for this building are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.
6. **Alterations/Additions:** Interior space has been remodeled using temporary partitions and lights have been replaced with fluorescent tubes. Acoustical tile ceilings were added to some offices in the 1960s.

B. Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B of report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character:** Nurse and his team of architects designed reinforced concrete buildings covered with white stucco and red tile roofs and other features such as arcades and ornamental door surrounds in a basic Spanish Colonial Revival style. This style was used by Captain Nurse at Randolph Field in Texas and by other Army architects at various bases (Fine and Remington 1972:48; Thomason and Associates 1993). Captain Nurse blended the standard Colonial Revival design with elements borrowed from Moorish, Spanish Churrigueresque, Mission, and Art Moderne styles, creating a unique Spanish Eclectic look.

While the majority of initial construction was completed in 1935, a few permanent buildings, such as the base exchange, were built after the base had opened and Nurse had departed for Hickam Field. These buildings, however, were included in Nurse's original post plans and adhere to the architectural style of the existing permanent buildings. Although this building has several features that differ stylistically from the original post buildings, it was designed to fit into the main base area and is visually compatible with its surroundings.

2. **Condition of fabric:** The exterior fabric has peeling paint but otherwise is in good condition. The interior ceiling tiles are falling to the floor and paint is peeling off walls and ceiling. The building is deteriorating due to lack of maintenance.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. **Overall dimensions:** Building 412 is rectilinear in shape and measures 158 feet by 62 feet 10 inches. It consists of a two-story front office building with a one-story warehouse attached to the rear.

2. **Foundation:** The foundation is concrete piles and concrete slabs.

3. **Walls:** The exterior walls are concrete frame with 12-inch-square hollow tile blocks faced with cementitious stucco rendered with a smooth face. Exterior detailing consists of a simple stucco-covered concrete cornice band beneath the roofline,

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projecting cast concrete window sills, and a main entrance framed by a projecting concrete arch with accentuated voussoirs and a keystone.

4. **Structural systems, framing:** Structural support is provided by reinforced concrete columns and a girder system with concrete slab flooring spanning between concrete joists. The roof is wooden truss.

5. **Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads:** The primary entrance is reached by a concrete stoop with concrete risers and treads. The rear warehouse has a wooden loading dock along the southeast side and a wooden porch on the rear elevation. A narrow porch, supported by wooden posts, is located along the northwest elevation, on the west part. This porch has an asbestos shingle over wood frame foundation and a shed roof covered with composition shingles. A concrete stairway with pipe railings and stoop are located at the northwest corner of the warehouse portion and a raised wooden ramp extends from the building to the adjacent warehouse (Building 400).

6. **Chimneys:** A square metal chimney extends upward from the exterior of the building and vented the blowers. Metal vents and pipes protrude from the warehouse roof and one hooded duct extends from the center of the hipped roof office section.

7. **Openings:**

a. **Doorways/doors:** The primary entrance in the central front facade is double wood with three recessed panels and a fanlight with nine spokes. Access to the rear warehouse is through a metal sliding warehouse door. Side pedestrian doors are solid core wood with one recessed panel on the bottom and two fixed panes of glass on top. Side warehouse doors are recessed panels and a fixed window with 10 lights.

b. **Windows/shutters:** Exterior windows consist of twelve-light metal frames, the top and bottom row of lights are fixed with the center six lights forming an operable awning window. The first floor facade entryway is flanked by windows, with six sets on the second floor. Other windows on the first and second floor are the same and occur in groups of three, with security type windows on the first floor; there are three sets each on the first and second floor side elevations.

8. **Roof:**

a. **Shape/covering:** The front office has a hipped roof covered with Mission tile roofing and a Mission tile ridge line, while the rear warehouse has an end gable roof with composition sheathing over wood.

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b. Cornice/eaves: A simple cornice band of flush finish concrete is located immediately beneath the roofline. Metal gutters and drainspouts are located along the roofline and down the corners of the building.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. First Floor: The first floor consists of 8 offices. The one-story warehouse is open with concrete columns.

b. Second Floor: The second story office has a central hallway with offices located off the hall. Some of these are partitioned into small rooms using temporary walls.

c. Attic: The attic consists of open space.

2. Stairways: A concrete stairway provides access to the second story offices from the central entry. Metal edge plates cover the top portion of the riser and the tread. The balustrade consists of a double rail and the balusters are constructed of two-inch round pipe.

3. Flooring: Subflooring in the entire building is concrete slab. The floors in the lower story of the office block and upstairs hallway corridor are eight-inch square gray asphalt tile; those in the upper story are brown striated linoleum. Flooring in the main warehouse is smooth finished concrete; that in the offices is eight-inch square white marbleized asphalt tile.

4. Wall/ceiling finish: The interior outside walls are painted concrete and concrete block. Interior walls on the second story office block have 3/4 height frosted glass panels and acoustical tile. Walls in the warehouse offices are plywood. Ceilings have painted concrete beams and are painted concrete slab. In some offices acoustical tile suspension ceilings have been installed; many of these tiles have fallen.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Original interior doors are a combination of standard wood with five recessed panels, standard wood doors with four recessed panels and four lights, or metal with a recessed panel and louvers. Replacement doors are hollow core wood with aluminum knobs.

b. Windows: There is single light frosted glass between upper story offices.

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6. Decorative features/trim: No decorative trim was noted.
7. Hardware: Interior door hardware consists of standard metal circular knobs with half mortise door hinges. The original brass switchplates are extant.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Heating is provided by a Mars Furnace, Model #900S, Serial #587450, installed by Pacific Gas Heating Company of San Francisco. Ceiling ductwork is exposed. Water in the latrines was heated with a Whitehead Hot Water Heater.
 - b. Ventilation: Pipe vents extend from the roof. The two-story section has a duct system with a hooded exhaust protruding from the roof.
 - c. Lighting: Original lighting in the office block consisted of "schoolhouse" type fixtures with a metal canopy, rod, and large milkglass bowl; they are extant only in the upstairs hallway and the latrines. Replacement lighting fixtures and those in the warehouse are suspended double tube fluorescent grilled fixtures.
 - d. Plumbing: A porcelain drinking fountain is located in the central entryway. It was manufactured by the Halsey W. Taylor Co., Warren (Connecticut). There are two latrines on the second story. They contain porcelain sinks by Standard. One has only a toilet, while the other is outfitted with a "Standard" urinal and toilet. The latrines contain original hardware, including chrome-plated toilet paper holders and faucets.
9. Original Furnishings: None noted.

D. Site:

1. General site orientation: The primary facade of Building 412 faces southwest towards Escolta Avenue; access to the warehouse block is from 4th Avenue. The building is located in the original Spanish Colonial Revival district of Hamilton Army Air Field on a flat site that is surrounded by rolling hills, fitting within a grid system adjacent to the flight field.
2. Historic landscape design: Captain Nurse's overall plan for base design included thoughtful use of rock walls, terracing, and plantings to create a visual effect that was continued, in a more limited fashion, during World War II. Rock terracing throughout the original base served to simultaneously separate individual residences while visually uniting various sections of the base into an overall city-like plan. They were built as part

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of the final phase of original post construction in 1935 (Hamilton Official Photographs 1934-1935). Foundation and accent plantings, tree-lined streets, and retention of natural oak groves and rolling hills complement the rock work.

The majority of buildings in the administration area have some landscaping, particularly around the NCO barracks. Street trees, such as Modesto ash, camphor, and various palms, are present throughout this area. Building corners and doorways are delimited by a number of conifers, the most prominent being sawara false cypress and Italian cypress. Accent trees include coast redwood and some red ironbark, which were incorporated into divider triangles and sometimes near entrances. California and Mexican fan palms and golden bamboo were prominent framers of entrances, as was the New Zealand dracaena. Foundation plantings are quite diverse and include mock orange, flowering quince, Portugal laurel, and Manukka tea tree. Japanese privet, Hollywood juniper, and heavenly bamboo appear to have been added subsequent to the late 1930s and were not part of the original landscape design on base.

The front entryway is flanked by conifer accent trees. Corners are also accented. Foundation shrubbery is also present. A lawn extended to the sidewalk from the main entry stoop.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398). Copies of the original drawings of this building are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

C. Interviews:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

D. Bibliography:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

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Sources cited in this individual report are listed below.

Fine, Jesse, and Lenore Remington

1972 *Army Corps of Engineers: Construction in the U.S.* U.S. Army and World War II, Office of Military History.

Hamilton Facility Cards

1933-1971 Maintenance Cards for Base Facilities. On file, Hamilton Army Air Field Installation Office, Novato, and Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

Maniery, Mary L., Leslie R. Fryman, and Fred Hrusa

1993 *National Register of Historic Places Evaluation, Hamilton Army Air Field Historic District, Marin County, California*. Submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.

Thomason and Associates

1993 *Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas*. Cultural Resource Survey, Final Report. Nashville, Tennessee. On file, State Office of Historic Preservation, Austin, Texas.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

F. Supplemental Material:

Copies of representative floor plans of Facility No. 412, dated in the 1930s and prepared by the Quartermaster's General Office are attached to this form. The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration. The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

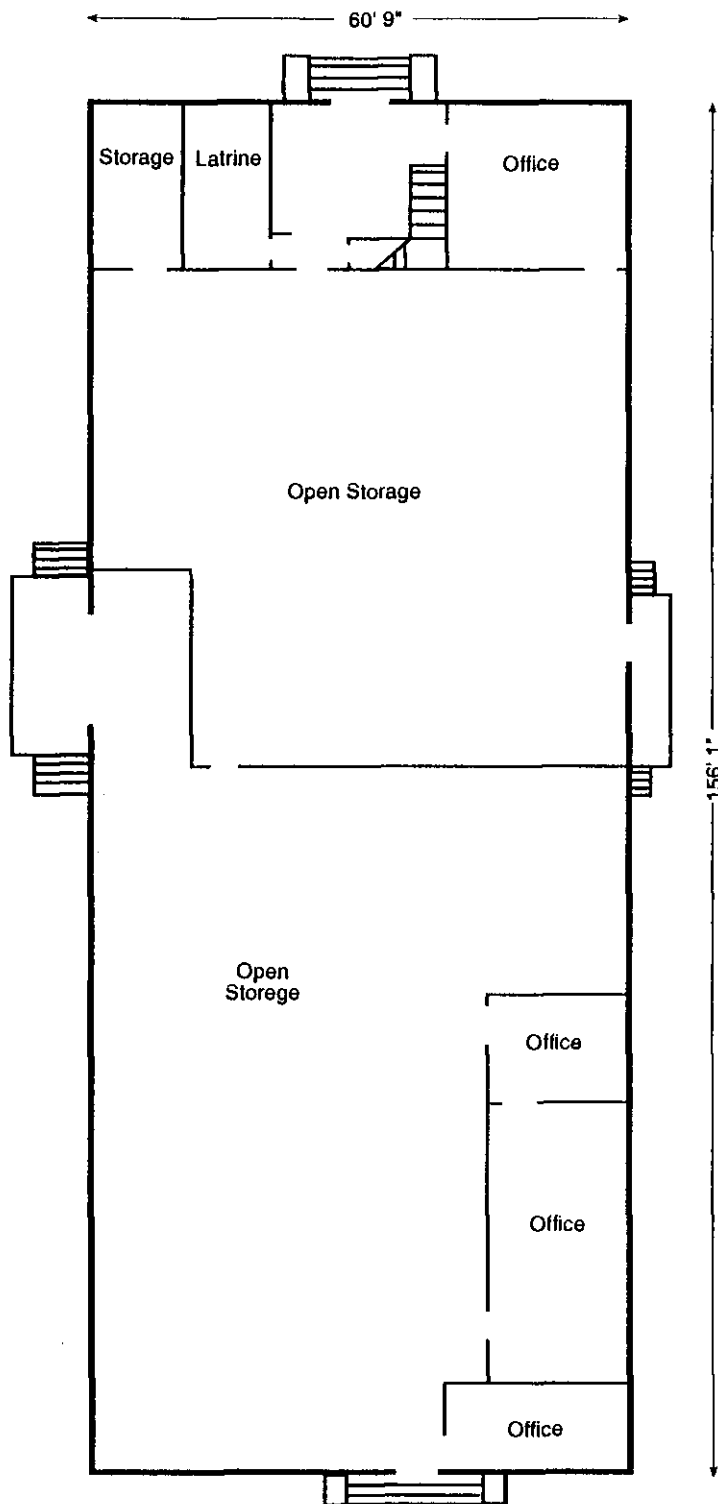
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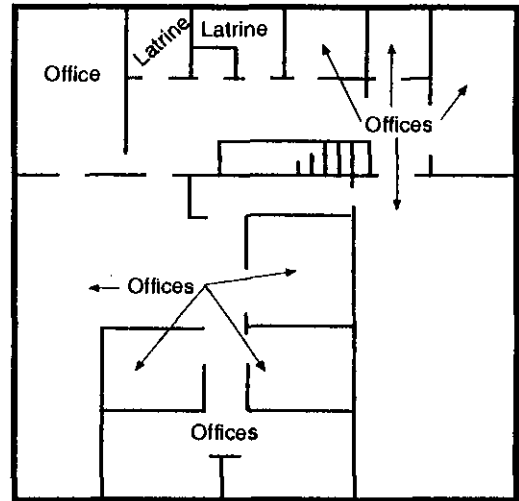
As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

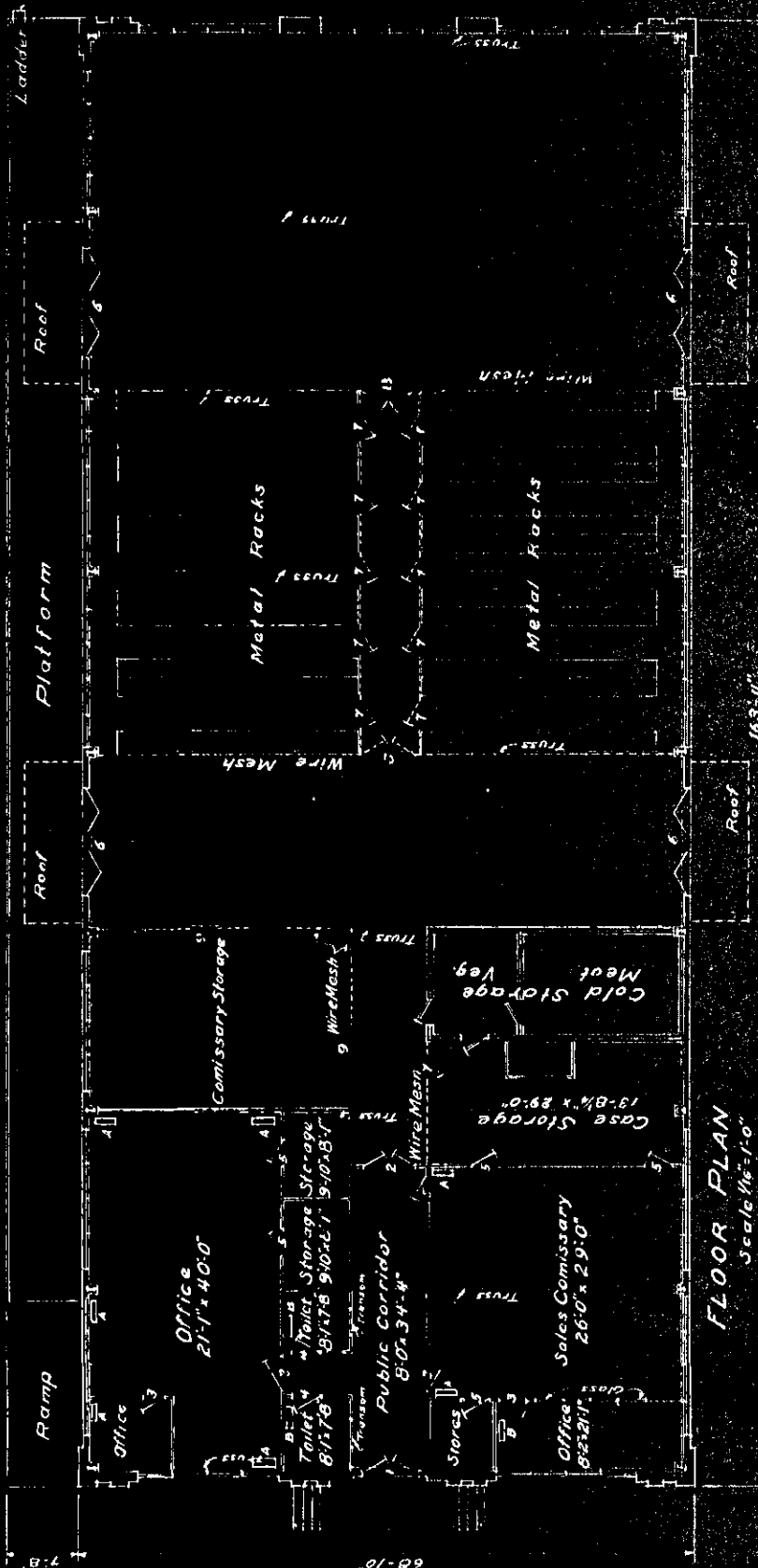
The title page, Part I, and Part III were prepared by Mary L. Maniery, Historian, PAR Environmental Services, Sacramento. Architectural descriptions in Part II were compiled by Judith Marvin, Historian/Architectural Historian, Foothill Resources, Murphys, California. Descriptions were checked against photographs and plans by Mary L. Maniery and were embellished and corrected, as necessary. Information on historic landscape design was extracted by Mary L. Maniery from a report prepared by Dr. Fred Hrusa, Botanist, PAR Environmental Services. Photography was prepared by David DeVries, Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR





DOOR SCHEDULE		
Mk	Size	Description
1	2'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/2"	Truss Top Panel
2	2'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/2"	Glass Top Panel
3	3'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/2"	Truss Top Panel
4	3'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/2"	Glass Top Panel
5	3'-0" x 7'-0" x 1/2"	Wood Panels
6	2'-0" x 6'-0" x 1/2"	Folding door Top Panel
7	3'-0" x 7'-0"	Wire Mesh
8	2'-3" x 7'-0"	
9	4'-0" x 7'-0"	Slide

RADIATOR SCHEDULE			
Mk	No.	Sec.	Co./Width, Height
A	7	8	10' 6" 10' 31"
B	3	7	8' 9" 6" 10' 31"

Total Gas Steam Radiation
974 Sq. Ft.

WAR. DEPARTMENT
OFFICE CONSTRUCTING QUARTERMASTER
HAMILTON FIELD, CALIF.

Q. M. WAREHOUSE

Drawn BEE	6/24/100	10
Traced BEE	6/24/100	104
Checked BEE	6/24/100	373
By J. Q. M. C.	6/24/100	373
Constructing Quartermaster	6/24/100	373
Building No. 42		